Dear Mr Bunt

Re: Inquiry into Growing the Suburbs

The Moreland Energy Foundation Ltd (MEFL) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

The business case for precinct-scale urban development

Business-as-usual urban growth places increasing demands on largely centralised infrastructure and essential services. Refocusing on precinct-scale urban development models offers the opportunity to greatly reduce the pressure placed on centralised systems, while creating local, efficient systems and related employment opportunities.

The Business Models for Enabling Sustainable Precincts (BMESP) report (Attachment 1) demonstrated the economic, social and environmental benefits of well-designed precincts. These include reducing the pressure on:

- **Energy** infrastructure through improved energy efficiency and distributed energy
- **Transport** networks through encouragement of mixed use developments and local job opportunities
- **Road** networks through incorporation of good public transport and active transport options into urban developments
- **Waste** collection and disposal services through reduction in waste going to landfill
- **Wastewater** treatment and disposal facilities, as well as dams and waterways, through improved water efficiency, rainwater collection, local stormwater management and decentralised waste water treatment

Implementing precinct-scale urban development

The BMESP report details 42 examples of successful precinct-scale developments in a variety of urban contexts both in Australia and internationally. The report also highlights some of the obstacles and potential policy solutions to these obstacles, including support from government agencies in navigating regulatory processes by setting up cross-government working groups, funding additional technical research and developing guidelines for the approvals of new technology.
MEFL has also worked to develop the *Sustainable Urban Development Framework* (SUDF) *(Attachment 2)*, which provides a roadmap for delivering urban development that captures these benefits. The SUDF outlines opportunities across energy, waste, water, transport and materials, and provides a process of the analysis and customisation of these opportunities to meet a site’s specific needs. It has already been successfully used by developers in a number of locations across Melbourne.

There is strong potential for this approach to be applied to growth area infrastructure planning, something MEFL would be willing to discuss further.

*About the Moreland Energy Foundation*

MEFL is a not-for-profit organisation delivering sustainable energy solutions to the community. It was established by the City of Moreland in 2000 and has more than ten years experience in delivering energy saving programs through education and behaviour change, home retrofitting, business efficiency and skills training activities.

MEFL is currently implementing a number of large-scale demonstration, community and business engagement and enterprise projects as part of the Moreland Solar City initiative, a partnership with the City of Moreland and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments under the federal Solar Cities Programme.

Through the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, a network of MEFL and 9 local governments (representing 25 per cent of Melbourne’s population) MEFL is pioneering the delivery of sustainable energy projects at the regional scale.

*Further information*

For further information please contact Eli Court, Energy Policy Advocate on 9385 8529 or via eli@mefl.com.au.

Yours sincerely

Paul Murfitt  
CEO